





## HIMANTOPUS NOVÆ-ZELANDIÆ, *Gould.*

### New Zealand Stilt.

*Himantopus Novæ-Zelandiæ*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc. for January 26, 1841.

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As might be expected, the colonization of New Zealand has brought to light many ornithological novelties peculiar to those islands, the natural productions of which are even at this time so imperfectly known. The species here represented is, perhaps, one of the most interesting of those forwarded to the New Zealand Company by Dr. Dieffenbach, and which that body have very liberally placed at my disposal, for the purpose of describing and figuring. I particularize this species as being interesting, not so much for its beauty, as for its forming another member of the very limited genus *Himantopus*, of which until lately only one species was known. I regret to say that no information as to its habits, changes of plumage, or the localities in which it is found, has been forwarded with the specimens; they were merely labeled—"Waders killed at Port Nicholson." The two specimens sent not only differ from every other known species, but are also very dissimilar from each other in plumage and in size, one being very much larger than the other; though the dissimilarity in size is not greater than I have observed to exist between the sexes of the White-headed Stilt. The least of the two, which I presume to be the female, has the whole of the plumage black or blackish brown; while the other has the forehead, the front of the neck and the breast white; the tail and all the remainder of the plumage being black, like the other. I am inclined to believe that the difference in colouring is either attributable to youth, or that it is a seasonal character; in all probability, the entirely black plumage is that of summer.

The whole of the plumage sooty black, with the exception of the back, wings and tail, which are glossed with green; bill black; feet pink-red: the other specimen has the forehead, lores, chin, front and sides of the neck, chest and under tail-coverts white.

The figures are of the natural size.